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ABSTRACT

Based on five years of research about "Science Talks," this book provides a window into elementary children's thinking about the world and presents a view of how students build complex theories, identify important questions, and begin to enter the world of science, all within the naturalistic setting of the classroom. It is proposed that classroom science be taught as a particular practice of science in U.S. culture, and presents a description of how a discourse acquisition approach to teaching and learning enables all children and their teachers to engage fully in scientific thought. The content includes the origins of science teaching and "Science Talks"; descriptions of the content, structure, and practice of the child-centered model; and explanations of current understanding of how the teacher's role in this model develops and changes over time including how the model could change science instruction as a whole. Chapter titles include: "What is Science?"; "Anatomy of a Science Talk"; "Theory Building as an Irrational Activity"; "Misconceptions as a Search for Origins"; "Science Talk for Synthesis"; "Building Curriculum from Children's Questions"; and "Teachers as Model, Teacher as Coach." (LZ)

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